

**KENTUCKY BOARD OF NURSING**  
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**ADVISORY OPINION STATEMENTS 1983-2012 SUMMARY**

Beginning in 1983, the Kentucky Board of Nursing published Advisory Opinion Statements on various nursing practice issues. This document provides a consolidated summary of those statements issued from 1983 - 2012.

**Index of Practice Components**

This summary includes information on the following practice components:

Abandonment, patient
Advanced life support procedures
Arterial puncture, specimen collection
Assignments, accountability/responsibility
Cancer, Gyn, detection procedures
Cardiac invasive procedures, assistance with
Confidentiality of patient information
Cosmetic & Dermatological procedures
Delegation to unlicensed persons
Delegation to paramedics in ER
Dialysis
Endoscopic procedures
Gastric tubes
Internal Defibrillator
Intrapartum patient care
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LPN practice components
Medication adm, PRN and placebos
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Nursing Students, employment of
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Would debridement

## **KBN Mission**

The primary mission and purpose of the Board is to develop and enforce state laws governing the safe practice of nursing in order to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth. As a regulatory agency of state government, the Board of Nursing accomplishes an aspect of this mission by issuing advisory opinions on what constitutes the legal scope of nursing practice.

## **Information**

An advisory opinion is not a regulation of the Board; it does not have the force and effect of law. Rather, an opinion is issued as a guidepost to licensees who wish to engage in safe nursing practice.

## **Applicable Statutory Definitions**

KRS 314.011(8) defines "advanced practice registered nursing practice" as:

... The performance of additional acts by registered nurses who have gained added knowledge and skills through an organized postbasic program of study and clinical experience and who are certified by the American Nurses' Association or other nationally established organizations or agencies recognized by the board to certify registered nurses for advanced nursing practice. The additional acts shall, subject to approval of the board, include, but not be limited to, prescribing treatment, drugs, devices, and ordering diagnostic tests. Advanced practice registered nurses who engage in these additional acts shall be authorized to issue prescriptions for and dispense nonscheduled legend drugs as defined in KRS 217.905, under the conditions set forth in KRS 314.042. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as requiring an advanced practice registered nurse designated by the board as a nurse anesthetist to obtain prescriptive authority pursuant to this chapter or any other provision of law in order to deliver anesthesia care. The performance of these additional acts shall be consistent with the certifying organization or agencies' scopes and standards of practice recognized by the board by administrative regulation.

KRS 314.011(6) defines "registered nursing practice" as:

...The performance of acts requiring substantial specialized knowledge, judgment, and nursing skill based upon the principles of psychological, biological, physical, and social sciences in the application of the nursing process in:

- a) The care, counsel, and health teaching of the ill, injured or infirm.
- b) The maintenance of health or prevention of illness of others.
- c) The administration of medication and treatment as prescribed by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse and as further authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with American Nurses' Association Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses. Components of medication administration include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Preparing and giving medication in the prescribed dosage, route, and frequency, including dispensing medications only as defined in subsection (17)(b) of this section;
  - 2. Observing, recording, and reporting desired effects, untoward reactions, and side effects of drug therapy;
  - 3. Intervening when emergency care is required as a result of drug therapy;
  - 4. Recognizing accepted prescribing limits and reporting deviations to the prescribing individual;
  - 5. Recognizing drug incompatibilities and reporting interactions or potential interactions to the prescribing individual; and
  - 6. Instructing an individual regarding medications.
- d) The supervision, teaching of, and delegation to other personnel in the performance of activities relating to nursing care.
- e) The performance of other nursing acts which are authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with American Nurses' Association Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses.

KRS 314.011(10) defines "licensed practical nursing practice" as:

... The performance of acts requiring knowledge and skill such as are taught or acquired in approved schools for practical nursing in:

- a) The observing and caring for the ill, injured, or infirm under the direction of a registered nurse, a licensed physician, or dentist.
- b) The giving of counsel and applying procedures to safeguard life and health, as defined and authorized by the board.
- c) The administration of medication or treatment as authorized by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse and as further authorized or limited by the board which is consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.
- d) Teaching, supervising, and delegating except as limited by the board.
- e) The performance of other nursing acts, which are authorized, or limited by the board and which are consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses' Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.

KRS 314.021(2) states:

All individuals licensed under provisions of this chapter shall be responsible and accountable for making decisions that are based upon the individuals' educational preparation and experience in nursing and shall practice nursing with reasonable skill and safety.

### **Accountability and Responsibility of Nurses**

KRS 314.021(2) holds nurses individually responsible and accountable for rendering safe, effective nursing care to clients and for judgments exercised and actions taken in the course of providing care.

Acts, which are within the permissible scope of practice for a given licensure level, may be performed only by those licensees who personally possess the educational preparation and current clinical competency to perform those acts safely and competently. A nurse/licensee who doubts his/her personal competency to perform a requested act has an affirmative obligation to refuse to perform the act, and to inform his/her supervisor and the provider prescribing the act, if applicable, of his/her decision not to perform the act.

If a nurse accepts an assignment that the nurse believes is unsafe or for which the nurse is not educationally prepared, then the nurse also assumes the potential liability, which may occur as a result of the assignment. Others may equally or concurrently be responsible, accountable, and liable for a licensee's actions.

The responsibilities which any nurse can safely accept are determined by the variables in each nursing practice setting. These variables include:

1. The nurse's own qualifications including:
  - a) basic prelicensure educational preparation;
  - b) knowledge and skills subsequently acquired through continuing education and practice; and
  - c) current clinical competence.
2. The "standard of care" which would be provided in similar circumstances by reasonable and prudent nurses who have similar training and experience.
3. The complexity and frequency of nursing care needed by a given client population.

4. The proximity of clients to personnel.
5. The qualifications and number of staff.
6. The accessible resources.
7. The established policies, procedures, standards of practice, and channels of communication that lend support to the types of nursing services offered.

### **Educational Preparation and Documentation**

Nurses are responsible for having adequate educational preparation and experience to safely perform any act they perform as required by KRS 314.021 (2). Nurses should maintain documented evidence of completion of continuing education and/or other training, and of demonstrated clinical competency in the performance of nursing acts.

### **Standards of Practice**

Nurse's practice should be consistent with the *Kentucky Nursing Laws*, established standards of practice, and be evidence-based.

### **Issuance of Advisory Opinion Statements and Individual Opinion Letters**

When studying practice issues, the Board reviews and considers applicable standards of practice statements published by professional nursing organizations; the educational preparation of both registered and licensed practical nurses as provided in the prelicensure nursing education programs in the Commonwealth; and, when applicable, the organized post-basic educational programs for advanced practice registered nurses. The Board also gathers information regarding practice issues from nurses in relevant practice settings (including staff nurses, supervisors, nurse faculty members, etc.) and/or representatives from state nursing associations in the Commonwealth, among others. Further, the Board reviews applicable opinions issued by the Office of the Attorney General.

When multiple inquiries are received on the same practice matter, the Board publishes an advisory opinion statement for wide dissemination. In addition, the Board has addressed many individual practice related inquiries and issued advisory opinion responses/letters to these individual requests. These letters are also available from the agency. Should you have a practice related question that is not addressed in a published advisory opinion statement, please contact the Board office with the questions.

**CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY OF ADVISORY OPINION STATEMENTS  
ISSUED FROM 1983-2012**

*Alphabetized by Topic*

<b>PRACTICE COMPONENT</b>	<b>WITHIN APRN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN RN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN LPN SCOPE?</b>	<b>AOS # REFERENCE and COMMENTS</b>
<b>Abandonment (Patient)</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #24 for the complete statement.
<b>Advanced Life Support Procedures:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cricothyrotomy</li> <li>• Chest tube placement</li> <li>• Defibrillation</li> <li>• Endotracheal intubation</li> <li>• Peripheral IV placement – external jugular vein site</li> <li>• Umbilical arterial catheterization</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #5 for the complete statement.  APRN may independently initiate the procedures. RN initiates the procedures using established guidelines. LPN may assist others in performing the procedures.
<b>Arterial Puncture, Specimen Collection</b>	Yes	Yes	No	AOS #6 *
<b>Assignments, Accountability and Responsibility</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #19 for the complete statement.
<b>Cancer, GYN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-Manual exam</li> <li>• Breast exam</li> <li>• Pap smear</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes	No	AOS #2 *  APRN may independently initiate the procedures. RN initiates according to guidelines, identifies abnormalities and reports/refers to others for treatment and diagnosis. LPN may assist others in performing the procedures.
<b>Cardiac Procedures (Invasive) Assistance</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #20 for the complete statement.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS # 34 for the complete statement.
<b>Cosmetic &amp; Dermatological Procedures by Nurses</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #35 for the complete statement.
<b>Delegation to Unlicensed Persons</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	See 201 KAR 20:400 and AOS #15 for the complete information.
<b>Delegation to Paramedics in ER</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See 201 KAR 20:400 and AOS #33 for the complete information.



<b>PRACTICE COMPONENT</b>	<b>WITHIN APRN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN RN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN LPN SCOPE?</b>	<b>AOS # REFERENCE and COMMENTS</b>
<b>Dialysis</b> (Nurse and Technician Roles)	Yes	Yes	Yes	See 201 KAR 20:470 and AOS #21 for the complete information.
<b>Endoscopic Procedures</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #28 for the complete statement.
<b>Gastric Tubes</b> Gastrostomy Reinsertion and Nasogastric Tubes Insertion/Removal	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #11 for the complete statement.
<b>Internal Defibrillator</b> Deactivation by Nurses	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #39 for the complete statement.
<b>Intrapartum Patient Care</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #10 for the complete statement.
<b>Intravenous Therapy – recommended course content</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #03 for complete statement. See 201 KAR 20:490 for IV therapy practice.
<b>Intraspinal Route</b> Administration of Analgesic Medications	Yes	Yes, except in laboring patients.	No	See AOS #4 for the complete statement.
<b>LPN Practice Components</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	See AOS #27 for the complete statement and 201 KAR 20:490 for IV therapy practice.
<b>Medication Administration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placebos</li> <li>• “PRN” Medications</li> </ul>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #17 for the complete statement.
<b>Medication Administration</b> Via Various Routes	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #16 for the complete statement.
<b>Nursing Students, Employment of</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	See AOS #18 for the complete statement.
<b>Orders (Medical) Implementation</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	See AOS #14 for the complete statement.
<b>Orthopedics –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cast Application</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes, with limitation	No, but may remove, spread or split cast	See AOS #23 for a complete statement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed Reduction</li> </ul>	Yes	No	No	
<b>PICC Line</b> Insertion and management	Yes	Yes	No on insertion; Yes, with limitations— See 201 KAR 20:490.	See AOS #25 for the complete statement.
<b>Prehospital Emergency Care</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #26 for the complete statement.

<b>Prescribing of Medications to self and/or family</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #37 for the complete statement.
<b>PRACTICE COMPONENT</b>	<b>WITHIN APRN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN RN SCOPE?</b>	<b>WITHIN LPN SCOPE?</b>	<b>AOS # REFERENCE and COMMENTS</b>
<b>“Private Duty” Nursing</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	See AOS #22 for the complete statement.
<b>Psychiatric Nursing Practice-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counseling</li> <li>• Psychotherapy</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes, if Master’s prepared, other RNs may assist in psychotherapy, and perform counseling	See AOS # 27 Components of LPN practice	See AOS #13 for the complete statement.
<b>Respiratory Nursing Practice (Cardiopulmonary)</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #29 for the complete statement.
<b>Resuscitation</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #36 for the complete statement.
<b>School Nursing Practice</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes, with limitations	See AOS #30 for the complete statement.
<b>Sedation, Administration of Medications</b>	Yes	Yes, for sedation and analgesia but not for anesthesia	No, prohibited by 201 KAR 20:490	See AOS #32 for the complete statement.
<b>Self-Administration of medications in a non-healthcare setting</b>	⇒	⇒	⇒	See AOS #38 for the complete statement.
<b>Sheath Removal</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #31 for the complete statement.
<b>Spinal Screening</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #1 *
<b>Surgery, RN First Assistant</b>	Yes	Yes	No	See AOS #8 for the complete statement.
<b>Wound Closure (Superficial)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stapling and Suturing</li> <li>• Topical adhesives</li> <li>• Removal of Staples and Sutures</li> </ul>	Yes  Yes  Yes	Yes, with exception.  Yes  Yes	No  Yes  Yes	AOS #7 *  RN does not suture muscle, nerve or tendon, except as an OR First Assistant.
<b>Wound Debridement</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Includes surgical and/or mechanical removal of nonviable tissue. See AOS #9 for the complete statement.

\* This AOS has been removed from current publication and archived as the practice has been incorporated into the common practice of nursing. The practice information has been consolidated into this summary grid.

Attached is a list of the current Advisory Opinion Statements. A copy of the statements may be purchased from the Board office or downloaded from the KBN website at <http://kbn.ky.gov>

### **Determining Scope of Practice**

In addition to these advisory opinion statements, the Kentucky Board of Nursing has published "Scope of Practice Determination Guidelines" which contains a decision tree chart providing guidance to nurses in determining whether a selected act is within an individual nurse's scope of practice now or in the future. A copy of the guideline is available on the KBN website at <http://kbn.ky.gov>.

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